

A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE VOTERS'
ACCEPTANCE OF LAFOLLETTE AS THEIR
GOVERNOR OF WISCONSIN IN 1900

by

VIRGINIA WICKS VIDICH

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
(Sociology)

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

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"While hitherto the major changes of history have very often been incomprehensible both to individuals and to sectional groups, the evolution of society has now reached a point at which these processes cannot be adjusted without adequate insight on the part of the actors."

-- Karl Mannheim in Man and Society

INTRODUCTION

To understand the forces underlying politics is to gain insight into political behavior. Only in this manner can we attempt to make politics more predictable. Although a study of deviant mass behavior encounters serious difficulties, it is important precisely because deviations are regarded as the least predictable phenomena in American political life. This paper will attempt an analysis of the factors explaining the rise of a Republican insurgent and political leader -- Old Bob LaFollette.

After graduation from the law school of the University of Wisconsin in 1880, Bob LaFollette ran for district attorney of Dane County on the Republican ticket. Though opposed by the county Republican machine whose word was law to all aspiring politicians, young LaFollette won the election and served two terms. He then sought nomination as the Republican congressional representative of the old third Wisconsin district, and against the wishes of 'Boss' Keyes and the boys, beat the machine. After three terms in Congress, where he served on the ways and means committee and helped draft the famous McKinley tariff bill, he went down to defeat with the rest of his party in 1890.

The break between United States Senator Philetus Sawyer of Oshkosh and Mr. LaFollette marked the practical entry of LaFollette into state politics in 1891. The Democrats who were in power in 1890, "anxious to make a record for efficiency before the people, and at the same time embarrass the opposition party,...brought suit against the former Republican state treasurers and their bondsmen for interest on state moneys for twenty years back, which in the easy practices of the times and treasurers had been loaning out to favored individuals and corporations and retaining the interest."¹ Senator Sawyer, the wealthiest of the bondsmen of

1 Albert O. Barton, LaFollette's Winning of Wisconsin (1894-1904), (Des Moines, Iowa: The Homestead Co., 1922), pp. 42-3.

former treasurers, would be liable for large sums were the state to win the cases. He arranged to meet LaFollette in Milwaukee. In the ensuing interview, according to LaFollette, Sawyer attempted to bribe him with large sums of cash if he would influence his brother-in-law, Judge Siebecker, presiding judge for the treasury cases. When Judge Siebecker refused to hear the cases after hearing LaFollette's story, the papers rumored that attempts at bribery had been made. Sawyer in a letter to the Milwaukee Sentinel denied the charges but LaFollette, never a man to let an issue go to rest, replied to Sawyer's letter making public the accusation

of bribery. By questioning the veracity of so mighty a man as Sawyer, LaFollette invited the wrath and ostracism of the Republican machine in the state. To his friends and enemies the incident was claimed as the finale to LaFollette's political career.

But in 1894 LaFollette organized a revolt against old party leaders by standing sponsor for the candidacy of Nils P. Haugen for governor, a strong vote-getter and popular with the Norwegian element in the state. Although Haugen lost the nomination, LaFollette carried Dane County for him and headed the delegation to the Milwaukee convention.² The old time

2 Barton, LaFollette's Winning of Wisconsin, p. 67.

leaders were given a shock at Haugen's strength and LaFollette was pointed out and sought for in the convention as the man responsible for this insurgency.

Unable to find a man who would seek the nomination for governor in opposition to the 'stalwarts', LaFollette decided that he would run in 1896. A sharp campaign followed, but, because delegates pledged to LaFollette were bought away from him at the convention, he lost the nomination to Upham.

In 1897 LaFollette started a strenuous speaking tour of county fairs, which signified his commencement as a crusader for political reform in Wisconsin. It was in 1897

that LaFollette first proposed primary elections as the alternative to government corruption.

The Milwaukee Journal on September 23, 1897 printed an editorial entitled 'La Follette's Aims Impossible'.

"Mr. LaFollette has been speaking for some time on the character of the Republican party in this state and indicating the changes in its policy which he deems necessary to its purification and success. He has said many things truly. His charges are grave and they are true. Flings at his possible motives will not silence them, nor will silence correct the evils complained of. His movement ought to sweep the state.

"But what he attempts is not Republican. He is not advocating Republican doctrines... Mr. LaFollette will have to get outside the party or subside. He cannot change the party. It is an impossible effort, though in a right direction. His teaching will logically lead him into the Democratic party which has always stood for what he advocates, no paternalism, no protection, no legislation, for private interests. Mr. LaFollette is right, but he will never be governor, at least not by Republican votes."

3

3 Clippings concerning Robert M. LaFollette, 1895-1910.
(Historical Library collection of thirty-five volumes,
Madison, Wis.).

In 1898 he was again a candidate for Republican governor and conducted an equally aggressive campaign. Although the machine was not yet ready to accept as 'radical' a leader as LaFollette appeared to be, "it was willing to adopt anti-corruption platforms if it could name its men

to enforce the laws."⁴ Scofield, the incumbent governor,

⁴ Barton, LaFollette's Winning of Wisconsin, p. 133.

was thus renominated for a second term but on practically a LaFollette platform.

After his two defeats for the nomination it was assumed by many that LaFollette would not be a candidate again in the 1900 election. However, LaFollette, not one to be dismayed by defeat, announced his candidacy in the Milwaukee Sentinel on May 16, 1899. This time the machine was unable to stop the popular demand and LaFollette received the unanimous nomination of the Republican convention. With four candidates against him, LaFollette was elected by the unparalleled plurality of 102,745 votes and a net majority of 85,941.

This, in brief, is the political career of Bob LaFollette up to 1900 when he assumed the reins of governor. Relentlessly opposed by the Republican machine, without funds or press support, defeated three times in convention, -- in spite of all this -- Bob LaFollette, an insurgent, was able to capture control of the Republican party.

If LaFollette had been a stalwart republican, instead of a reformist operating outside the party bounds, there would have been nothing noteworthy about his election as governor of the state. It is precisely because he was not a

party regular, like Upham or Scofield, that his ascent to power becomes of interest to students of political psychology. The problem which this paper will attempt to solve is: -- what are the factors that account for the voters' acceptance of LaFollette as their political reformist leader of Wisconsin in 1900?

PART I

Recognition of the Uniqueness of LaFollette

To determine recognition of the uniqueness of LaFollette two factors will be examined. First, we must have some understanding of the image of LaFollette held by his supporters and by the opposition, i.e. those qualities of a leader seized upon as exceptional. Secondly, we must determine the reaction of followers and opposition to the leader's manipulation of symbols and appeals. Although it is possible and advisable to make such a distinction for the purposes of analysis, such a clear distinction seldom exists in the mind of the average citizen. This is particularly relevant in the case of LaFollette who "had a remarkable facility or fortune in making himself and his cause interchangeable in the public mind, making it possible for him to press his propaganda while his friends rather urged support of the man."¹ Therefore the classification will be somewhat

1 Barton, op. cit., p. 55.

arbitrary, and the quotations cited may overlap.

Leader Image

During the period from 1897 to 1900 LaFollette was a familiar public figure in the state. Although most of the

Wisconsin press either silently or articulately was opposed to him, certain papers, such as the Milwaukee Sentinel and the Milwaukee Journal, were sympathetic to him and his reform cause.² The various articles and editorials on

-
- 2 Since the newspaper files for the period, 1895-1920, were available it seemed advisable to use them as the primary source material rather than depending on secondary sources or accounts of LaFollette written in retrospect.
-

LaFollette appearing during this period provide us with the necessary information regarding the image of the leader held by his followers.

The Milwaukee Journal on August 4, 1897 editorialized:

"Everybody knows that LaFollette is not the aggressor, but that he was selected for slaughter when he refused to carry out the wishes of the party boss in the treasury cases. For a time it appeared that the Madison man's career had been ruined... All kinds of accusations were made against him as if he, instead of the boss, were the guilty one... Hardly a Republican paper in the state had one kind word to say of him for his heroic defense of his honor. But the rank and file of the party understood the service LaFollette had done them and the other taxpayers of Wisconsin by refusing a price for trying to find a way to unlock the back door of a court of justice, and they did not forget him. It was as certain as that the sun would shine that he would sooner or later be called to leadership... It is here, and the condition of things cannot be changed by alleging that he is making factional warfare. He is but the instrument in the hands of the justice-loving members of the party... Twice now

LaFollette has refused to sell himself.
May he continue to fight off infamy." 3

3 Clippings, August 4, 1897. (Italics are mine).

On August 28 of that year The Journal further commented:

"In the first place the machine organs are saying very little about the Madison orator or his speeches. The Journal was the only newspaper in the state that was impartial or enterprising enough to give the public the text of his speech. The action of the organs probably means that they fear the effect of the movement upon the people and hope to minimize it by silence.

"But among the people it is different...When he spoke to the assembled farmers of Sauk County at Fern Dell, Thursday, the meeting was a most enthusiastic one, and those parts of the address that were most vigorously applauded were those which were the most caustic arraignments of the machine. After the address was ended the sturdy yeomanry crowded the platform to meet the speaker and congratulate him upon his fearlessness in presenting the truth in a new light and to assure him that they would be with him whenever there was an attempt made again to down the machine and set up the rule of the people in its place. Men who admitted that they were unfavorable to his candidacy for governor last year, assured him that they would be with him from this time forward, and that they regretted having ever been against him. Others stated that they believed the stand he had taken was right and that it would receive the support of the people....But Mr. LaFollette is getting very close to the Democratic platform." 4

4 Clippings, August 28, 1897. (Italics are mine).

Under the heading, 'Wisconsin's Political Reformer', the Chicago Times Herald, September 27, of that year, included the following interesting study of him:

"Today LaFollette is the most conspicuous figure in the Badger commonwealth. He is a machine smasher of the John Maynard Harlan type. He is resolved to show the seamy side of present political conditions, and he is succeeding. Other men have tried to do so before. They have been gathered to their fathers. Naught remains of their endeavor save the memory of their failures...

"The proportions attained by the LaFollette crusade for greater purity in politics are due solely and alone to the man himself. Others might have said what he is saying and their works would have passed unnoticed. Into the campaign has been injected the whole of a remarkable personality, a personality so vastly different from that of any other that an attempt to compare it is not comparison, but contrast. LaFollette's personal force and individuality command attention. He is a natural leader of men....

"It is the same earnestness that now makes it possible for him to bring to see from his point of view men who before hearing were set against him with faces of flint. It is not through his eloquence that he captures the people. Neither does he pander to their passion, nor play upon their ignorance. But he has the quality of making men believe that he is sincere.

"A year ago Mr. LaFollette announced himself a candidate for governor...Soon the caucuses were held. Men who had never before attended the primaries began to exercise their prerogatives as citizens. ...Farmers drove for miles to vote for LaFollette delegates.

"Since that memorable struggle of 'Bob' LaFollette, he is said to have a genius for organization...Round about him

in his Madison office he gathered his friends and told them what to do. His was the master mind that directed it all. He had no money to spend. He would not have spent it if he had had it. He made no promises of office in event of his success. Yet day after day his fold of supporters grew. Men who were opposed to him came to see him. When they left they were his friends. If they made a second visit it was to bring others... In some cases this result was brought about by reason of the principles represented by LaFollette. Most often it was brought about by the personality of the man himself....

"LaFollette never forgets a name or a face...His handshake is a grip that at once establishes a fellowship. It is not affected... It is given to all friends whether they be great or small, rich or poor... His intense individuality compels magnetic response... He takes men right into the narrow circle of his exclusive attention. Every man believes that the orator is talking directly to him."⁵

5 Quoted in Barton, op. cit., pp. 83-86. Italics are mine.

A feature story on 'Robert M. LaFollette, -- the Orator', published in the Milwaukee Journal, October 2, 1897, gives an excellent account of the impression LaFollette as an orator left on his contemporaries.

"Below the ordinary height, he is compactly built, and has a square, almost massive face, when his stature is considered, and his head is covered with a thick, almost shaggy growth of dark brown hair. He is not a commanding figure by any means, but rather impresses one who sees him for the first time as possessed of solidity and a bulldog determination..."

"This intense and continued display of energy is one of the strong characteristics of the man, as expressed in his work as a public speaker, and it rarely fails to bring his hearers to him and to hold their attention....

"Perhaps the secret of his success as an orator is the fact of the singular appropriateness of each motion intended to emphasize his expressed thought. Does he describe the horrors of the Civil War and the fratricidal strife that nearly rent in twain the greatest people on earth, his face becomes awful in its expression of the very feeling with which he is attempting to impress his hearers.... He denounces the crushing greed and overbearing insolence and corruption of the corporations and the firm set lines of his face and tightly clenched hands and the whole attitude of the man are those of a just judge denouncing the iniquity that he had discovered.

"This may sound like exaggeration -- but into the most commonplace of his word paintings he throws the energy of a man apparently fully impressed with the whole force and truth of his statements... He carries his subject and his hearers both, and compels the latter to listen, if he cannot compel them to endorse what he may say.

"He is no joke -- nothing frivolous. He is in earnest and gives himself up wholly to the work he is doing. It is serious work to him and while he may not possess the finish of some of the noted orators of the day, he certainly does possess their force.

"Mr. LaFollette is a study. It may be that you do not agree with him either in premises or conclusion. But it cannot be denied that he impresses even the unbelievers among his hearers that he believes himself and believes in the truth and force of his statements. Perhaps this concentration of every power in the man to impress his hearers with his sincerity is

a stage trick, but it is well played and beyond detection. It is real and full of life and vitality, and with the average man who hears Robert LaFollette it is impossible to arrive at any other conclusion than that he takes himself seriously.

"As he bows for the last time and withdraws he seems as fresh as ever. You are impressed with the belief that the man is a sort of steam engine. He is iron in the sense that iron conveys the idea of endurance." 6

6 Clippings, October 2, 1897.

An account of one of the county fair speeches of LaFollette, written several years later by a convert, B. J. Daly, is of interest for revealing the lasting impression left by LaFollette on a listener in his audience. It is perhaps typical of the reaction of many citizens of Wisconsin during the late 1890's.

"I think it was in 1897 that I first heard of LaFollette or heard him speak. It was at a county fair in this city and was shortly after Mr. LaFollette had made sensational charges against Senator Sawyer, who at that time was the great dominating factor in republican politics in Wisconsin...I have heard a good many political speeches before and since, but that was the first time I had ever heard a man attack his own party and point out the sins it had been guilty of..."

"The speech made a profound and lasting impression on me, and doubtless on most of those who heard it, and convinced me of the man's perfect honesty. I went away in a dazed condition...All the world loves a lover, it is said, and

it is equally true that all the world loves a brave man, and certainly none but a brave man would have undertaken the mighty task which LaFollette had undertaken and which he was just beginning.

"I was a democrat, and always before that time I had gone away from hearing a republican speech more of a democrat than ever. But here was a man who spoke to me as a citizen, not as a partisan. He did not attack either party as a party; he attacked the bad in both parties, especially in his own. Do you wonder men were impressed?

"And yet we have been told by his enemies that he is not sincere. Well, maybe not, but those are not the ways of a doubledealer nor an insincere man. Surely if he is not honest he dissembles well." 7

7 Barton, op. cit., pp. 91-2. Letter quoted in full.

Following LaFollette's announcement of his candidacy for Republican governor in the spring of 1900, the press of the state devoted considerable space to a discussion of his merits and demerits.

The Milwaukee Daily News on May 16, 1910, wrote:

"In view of the fact that Mr. LaFollette has supplied the Republican party with its strongest ammunition for the coming campaign; that in point of ability he stands head and shoulders above any of the machine candidates and that his integrity and party loyalty are above suspicion, his nomination seemingly should follow as a matter of course." 8

8 Clippings, May 16, 1900.

After the Republican convention in Milwaukee on August 9, LaFollette, nominated on an unanimous ballot, was the favorite subject for news comment. The Marinette Daily North Star eulogized:

"The nominee for governor is a young man who has made a deep impression in politics in Wisconsin. He is a man of intellect and persuasive powers. He is a born leader of men and who knows not what defeat is. He is a brilliant orator and a speaker whose words are always anxiously awaited and will be a strong campaigner.

"He is an educated man and a gentleman who is above all, a working man and a plain and sturdy citizen, whose fellowships and sympathies are with the plain people of the state, whom he knows by heart. This is one reason for his popularity. There is no nonsense about him. He has no use for the subtle sophistries and the shallow and glittering rhetoric of the professional advocate and political acrobat, but he is nevertheless an effective stump speaker, because he puts his excellent good sense and the fervid warmth of his patriotic enthusiasm into his speeches." 9

9 Clippings, August 9, 1900.

In a sketch of the life and public services of 'The Next Governor of Wisconsin', the Shawano County Journal on August 9, stated:

"Robert Marion LaFollette has come to be pretty well known away beyond the Badger state as that of a natural, fearless and wise leader of men, and a champion of honesty and integrity in public affairs as well as private...He is logical and conclusive and this added to

his captivating personality, wins over his hearers almost in spite of them... He has met with very great opposition (to his reforms) but he has, because of that opposition, been all the more in earnest. As a result he has led the people into his way of thinking, and they have this summer shown that they are with him.

"One of Mr. LaFollette's chief characteristics is his intense earnestness. Whatever his hand finds to do he does with his might. Well may he do things in this way, for he undertakes only that in which he honestly believes. He is as true as he is earnest. He is hearty in his friendship. There is no sham about him.... He In all his intercourse with men he comes so close to them that his strong personality makes itself felt." ¹⁰

10 Clippings, August 9, 1900.

The State, a paper in Madison, commented in an editorial on August 10:

"The nomination of LaFollette for governor...is the culmination of a most striking career, marked by great strength of purpose, ambition and extraordinary ability....His rise he owes mainly to himself, to his great industry, indomitable perseverance and purity of motives..."

"In politics he has been from the first a leader, and leader of the progressive, forward moving element of the state. His political strength is by no means confined to the Republican party for there are thousands of Democrats in Wisconsin who make no secret of their intention to support him at the polls, both on account of his great abilities and attractive personality, and for the sake of the progressive ideas he represents.

"Mr. LaFollette's face and now that of the republican party under his leadership is turned towards the future. His triumph means progress and progress written

in capital letters. In short he is the candidate of the people and a higher tribute than that can be accorded no man."¹¹

11

11 Clippings, August 10, 1900.

At the convention¹² the committee of resolutions intro-

12 Ibid., reprinted in Milwaukee Sentinel, August 9, 1900.

The nomination speech of General Bryant is significant because of the salient features of LaFollette he thought important to stress.

"Gold could not buy him; flattery never swerved him; threats deterred him not...We want a governor who is the peer of the best. Standing upon a platform which you in your wisdom have made, this son of Wisconsin, who will not be bullied or bought, but who can always be advised, with your godspeed, will add luster to its name."

duced a resolution submitted by the Republicans of LaFayette County which was adopted unanimously amid great cheers.

The resolution read:

"Resolved: That recognizing the distinguished services that Hon. Robert M. LaFollette has rendered to the Republican party in the halls of congress, his strict integrity, his unswerving devotion to the interests of all citizens without regard to class or distinction, especially approving his zealous work in the interests of the farmer, the miner, the laborer, and the soldier, the Republicans of LaFayette county in convention assembled renew the assurances of loyalty given him ever since his entrance into public life."

13

13 Ibid., reprinted in Darlington Republic Journal, August 10, 1900.

The Vernon County Censor wrote on August 15, 1900:

"Old Vernon in common with and in the front rank of the third congressional district, has from the firing of the first gun, been enthusiastically and with unanimity for 'Bob'. Why? We believe it is because they had and have unquenchable faith in his adhesion to principles which are demonstrably for the interests of the whole people, his unimpeachable honesty, indomitable will, pre-eminent ability and his unalloyed Americanism.

"The principles emblazoned on the banner Robert M. LaFollette held aloft have not and never will be forsaken by him. They are right and just and part of himself and being true to himself he cannot be false to any man." 14

14 Clippings, August 15, 1900.

In the September 20th issue of the Mineral Point Tribune,¹⁵ an article was reprinted from the Scandinaven,

15. The Republican ex-governor, W. D. Hoard, long an ardent supporter of La Follette, was quoted in the Mineral Point Tribune as saying:

"He is brave, honest, and incorruptible and believes in the people. Take the aforementioned leading politicians who have fought his elevation all these years. They are the creatures of corporations. They deal in politics for the money there is in it, and to the shame of the people be it said, they had large political influence to sell.

"But LaFollette has not followed in their ways. He is today a poor man while his enemies have grown rich in political merchandising....It is these things that have sunk deep in the hearts of the voters of Wisconsin. It was a deep and abiding belief in his courage, his unbending integrity and splendid ability that gave him the support of the rank and file of the republican party in his recent triumphant nomination. It is a grand thing to feel and know that there are men who stand for the people in acts as well as words.

"It is this conviction that will bring to LaFollette the votes of thousands of democrats, who will gladly take the place of all the political harlots in his own party who may desert him. This is a grand time for all honest men in Wisconsin to get together and give their votes to McKinley and LaFollette." Clippings, Mineral Point Tribune, Sept. 20, 1900.

the most influential newspaper for the Norwegian element in the state.

"In the judgement of the Scandinavians it was a victory for the best principles and the best man -- in other words a victory for the people... While he is likely to disappoint those who have pictured him a heedless radical, there need be no doubt that he means just what he says and will leave nothing undone to secure the fulfillment of the pledges of the party... The rank and file of the republican party of Wisconsin share this implicit faith in their candidate for governor. They believe he was right and rejoiced in his undismayed attitude in defeat, and their confidence in him is unshaken now that the reins of power and responsibility have been placed in his hands... He is true to the core and will not fail. He will give his great progressive state an administration of the people, by the people, and for the people." 16

16 Clippings, reprinted in Mineral Point Tribune, Oct. 18, 1900.

The rally welcoming LaFollette to Superior was typical of the ovations he received from crowds during his fall campaign for governor. The Superior Evening Telegram reported on the rally as follows:

"The biggest, finest and most responsive political meeting ever held in the city of Superior was the one held at the Fair building last night. It was all in

honor of 'Bob' LaFollettee. The people of Superior amply demonstrated to 'Bob' that there is no man in political life today who stands closer to their hearts...

"The red fire and torch light procession was a fitting opener for the rousing event that followed. The city band led the procession, the Mac, Teddy and Bob First Voters Club, the South Superior Club, Swedish-American Club, Republican Club and others completed the line -- containing upwards of 1,000 republicans." 17

17 Clippings, Oct. 19, 1900.

• • • • •

In the articles and editorials cited above one receives the impression that LaFollette was loved by all except the most die-hard Stalwarts. But how did LaFollette's enemies regard him? Lincoln Steffens, in his article on LaFollette, Enemies of the Republic, published in McClure Magazine, reported on his interviews with the outstanding foes of LaFollette.

"They' say in Wisconsin that he is against the railroads, that he hates corporate wealth..."

"They' say...that LaFollette is a demagogue and if it is demagogy to go straight to the voters, then 'they' are right... 'They' say in Wisconsin that LaFollette is a Democrat; that he appeals to Democratic voters. He does. He admits it, but he adds that it is indeed to the Democratic voters that he appeals -- not to the Democratic machine.

"'They' say in Wisconsin that La Follette is ambitious; that he cannot be happy in private life; that, an actor born, he has to be on a stage..."

"'They' say in Wisconsin that he is selfish, dictatorial and will not consult... There must be something back of this charge, and a boss should be able to explain it. Boss Keye's cleared it up for me. He said that at the time Bob was running for district attorney, -- 'A few of us here -- well, we were managing the party and we were usually consulted about things generally. But LaFollette, he went ahead on his own hook, and never said a word to, well to me or any of us.'

"And so in Wisconsin 'they' will take you into a back room and warn you that LaFollette is ambitious. I asked if he was dishonest. Oh dear, no. Not that. Not a man in the state, not the bitterest of his foes that I saw, questioned LaFollette's personal integrity."¹⁸

18 Lincoln Steffens, "Enemies of the Republic", McClure's Magazine, October, 1904.

The reactions of certain newspapers to LaFollette's candidacy in 1900 reveals more clearly the image the opposition held of LaFollette.

The Madison Journal on May 17, 1900, commented:

"He has made mistakes and evinced qualities that, if not curbed, would make it much safer to elect governors with less ability and more pliability. His official integrity, personal uprightness and command of public affairs, however, are bedrock facts, and with these assets we are willing without reserve to trust the commonwealth to

to his keeping if it shall be the wish
of the majority."¹⁹

19 Clippings, May 17, 1900.

The Racine-Journal reported:

"The nomination of La Follette may not be satisfactory to quite a number of Republicans to be sure, but at the same time he is hardly the devil with horns and if nominated it will certainly be the duty of Republicans to give him their cheerful support."²⁰

20 Ibid., May 17, 1900.

The Whitewater Gazette pointed out:

"With all due respect to his ability as a statesman, it seems he has made a mistake. LaFollette is a most persuasive orator and he has long since convinced the people that there is more or less of 'a ring' which control Republican nominations... But probably unintentionally he convinced the people of the state that he was the center of another ring which was no better than the other."²¹

21 Ibid., May 22, 1900.

The Eau Claire Telegram, hostile to LaFollette, wrote on June 6:

"Will Mr. LaFollette support the Republican, state ticket in the fall campaign? It has not yet found answer; except that every one knows, while Robert can 'pump hot air' in great

volumes for himself, that history repeats itself, and the peculiarity of his situation is that he is a 'hostile' in relation to everybody not attached to his personal fortunes; and he simply cannot actively support the ticket any more than he did after his last defeat. It is not necessary to inquire because it is a matter which never could be settled, who is to be blamed for the fact that LaFolletteism means internecine strife, bitterness, revenge and all uncharitableness....

"Mr. LaFollette has issued a statement in which he says: 'I am opposed to a political or personal machine to control party nomination and legislative action.' Jokes of this sort from the candidate who has just as much of a personal machine as he could possibly put together in four years, will soon make his candidacy a screaming farce." 22

22 Clippings, June 6, 1900.

The Superior Evening Telegram commented on July 31 of that year:

"It seems to be agreed by the thoughtful that Wisconsin is on the threshold of a new political chapter, exciting without doubt, and long and beneficial to the state, or short and disastrous, according as Robert M. LaFollette is equal to the stupendous task before him.

"LaFollette is under heavy obligations to friends in every county, if not community in Wisconsin, and his magnetic and gracious way only makes it harder for him, for one can't shake hands with the man without a quiet feeling that he can get on the payroll any time he pleases. It is a winning

excellence before election, but the fatal gift of beauty afterwards." 23

23 Clippings, July 31, 1900.

From the preceding evidence we are able to gain some understanding of the image of LaFollette held by his supporters and opposition during the period from 1897 to 1900. The qualities of the leader cited as exceptional by his supporters include the following: personal integrity and honesty; great courage and fearlessness; sincerity and intense earnestness; personal magnetism; vitality and forcefulness; devotion to principles; persuasiveness in oratory; unusual ability in leadership, organization, and command of public affairs; and a non-partisanship concern in the interests of all citizens rather than specific groups.

In examining the other side of the coin -- the negative aspects attributed to LaFollette by his enemies -- the following qualities are included: he is regarded as a Politician, that is, a leader of a 'ring' opposed to the interests of the stalwart 'ring'; he is a Partisan, -- against the railroads, the corporations and the party bosses and (though not explicitly stated) for the people; he is a Demagogue -- appealing to the emotions and resentments of the crowd, although they grant that he is a persuasive orator; he is a Democrat, not a Republican, because he

appeals to Democratic voters and borrows Democratic ideology; he is Ambitious which accounts for his 'low' demagogic tactics, his perseverance in reform causes; and he is Selfish, and Dictatorial, will not consult with party bosses, he has great personal charm, with the implication of insincerity, and hypocrisy. However, even the opposition grants that LaFollette has unusual ability, and that his integrity and honesty are above reproach.

It seems apparent that these two pictures of the man are not contradictory but complementary. The same qualities have different meanings for the two groups and are consequently referred to in different contexts and by different names. To one group he is ambitious, and to the other he is sincere and devoted to principles. The construction placed upon these qualities varies with the interests and outlook of the group. A significant fact, however, is that by no group is LaFollette's integrity questioned. Such unanimity could only serve to reinforce the devotion of the supporters and to strengthen the fears of the opposition.

Effectiveness of Symbols and Appeals

For the reader to appreciate LaFollette's manipulation of symbols and appeals in his oratory, it is advisable to first briefly examine a representative speech of his. The 'Menace of the Machine' speech, used in the campaign of 1897, affords us the best opportunity to examine his use of

specific appeals.

The Chicago Record on August 28, 1897, reported in full LaFollette's stump speech at Waukesha, Wisconsin on the previous day, August 27. In substance he said:

"The basic principle of this government in state and nation is the will of the people, and its founders meant to insure government in obedience to that will. They intended to provide means thru popular representation such as would guarantee to all men equal voice, equal rights and equal possibilities. How have we guarded the treasure committed to us and are the conditions those intended to be secured? Why this popular restlessness and discontent which at almost every election brings changes in the governing party?... Why all this unrest unless the conviction is growing that somewhere something is radically wrong and that we are fast becoming dominated by hostile forces that thwart the will of the people and menace the perpetuity of representative government?"

Following a discussion of the history of corporations LaFollette stated:

"The businessman and artisan of the past gave to his business an individual stamp and reputation, making high moral worth an essential element of business life... The corporation is a machine for making money, demanding of its employees only obedience and service, reducing men to mere numbers... Individual responsibility, business conscience are merged into the impersonal corporate entity and while it absorbs much of the best business talent of the country drives the rest from the field, because it will not tolerate the competition it can crush....

"Want of personal responsibility except to the corporation itself, renders it a convenient cover for avarice and dishonesty. It has been made the instrumentality for the most extensive swindling

operations known in the history of finance... Railroads constructed at a cost from \$8,000 to \$17,000 a mile are bonded and stocked from \$30,000 to \$50,000 a mile, the difference between actual and fictitious cost, broken up into great fortunes for the manipulators, and the public charged upon traffic a profit on this enormous overvaluation.

"Through these means colossal fortunes have been amassed, menacing in their influence. A citizen of this country recently died leaving an estate of \$180,000,000.

"Illustrations of the great trusts and corporations are the Standard Oil monopoly, with its history of unspeakable wrong; the anthracite coal monopoly, holding 19/20's of the entire hard coal supply, in the grasp of eight railway companies... Thus within a very few years have been conceived and executed plans, now almost consummated, which will enable a few corporations, acting in combination, to control the power that moves all the wheels of industry, the fires that warm the homes of millions of our country. Oh, the crime of it all! God's beautiful storehouse of power and warmth closed by conspiracy, in plain violation of the common law, while his poor children perish with cold and want! Such a corporation leaves behind it ruin, despair, insanity and suicide.

"Corporations not content with taking tribute, shift upon those who render it the support of government as well, resist bearing a just share of the burdens of taxation. In Wisconsin last year the Pullman Palace Car Company paid as taxes to the state less than \$600... The Chicago, Milwaukee and Lake Shore Telegraph Company, \$232. A thorough investigation of this subject would so arouse the American people as to provoke them to revolution if the remedy couldn't be reached otherwise. Such a revolution would reach even the machine-made legislatures of the present day.

"Owning two-thirds of the personal property of the country, corporations throw the burden of taxation upon land, upon the home and the farm... In Madison personal property is assessed less now in the aggregate than it was 17 years ago, although real-estate valuation has nearly doubled.

"Money blinds and the rich tread upon the poor apparently dead to all human feeling except the passion to get and the passion to keep. God, how patient are Thy poor! When millions, now only discontented, are stung into action they will apply the remedy in their hands. The corporations and masters of manipulation in finance are heaping up the gold by a system of legalized extortion, and then extracting from the contributors -- to whom a little means so much -- a double share to guard the treasure!

"From this sowing of wind we must ultimately reap the whirlwind. Justice travels sometimes with leaden foot but she strikes with iron hand.

"Within a few months you have seen in a neighboring state almost in a condition of revolution an army of indignant citizens marching on their capital to save the great city of Chicago from the tyranny of a street-railway corporation, and you saw the legislature of that state indifferent to their arguments, their appeals, their threats, hand that proud city over to Yerkes, a bond slave for fifty years. Why were these supposed servants of the people so arrogant and insulting to their constituents? It was because under the existing caucus and convention systems, as the candidates of the machines of their respective parties, they felt secure of their place regardless of the will of the people. The machine is the outgrowth of the caucus and convention system."

LaFollette then launched into an attack on the Wisconsin legislature.

"When a bill to punish corrupt practices in campaigns and elections is mangled by amendment to destroy it; when measures such as the Davidson bills requiring corporations to pay a just share of the taxes go down to defeat... when republicans and democrats unite in defeating the Hall resolution to emancipate the legislature from all subserviency to corporations by prohibiting acceptances of railroad passes, sleeping-car passes, telegraph and express company frauds,... when money is refunded to state treasurers in violation of the pledges to the people, when these things happen and are made matters of public record, which no man may deny, then that man is untrue to his country, his party and himself who will not raise his voice in condemnation-- not in condemnation of the principles of the political party in which he believes or of the great body of its organization, but of the men who betray it and the method by which they control, only to prostitute it to base and selfish ends.

"The remedy is to begin at the foundation and make one supreme effort for victory over the present bad system. Nominate and elect men who will pass a primary election law which will enable the voter to select candidates directly without the intervention of caucus or convention controlled by a machine. Thus may a permanent reform be accomplished....

"Under this system you will destroy the machine because you destroy the caucus and convention system through which the machine controls party nominations. You will place the nominations directly in the hands of the people. You will restore to every state in the union the government given to this people by the God of nations."

24

In addition to the above speech the peroration to LaFollette's address to the Wisconsin State Fair on September 24, 1897 provides information for analyzing the use of specific appeals.

"We may differ as to political policies but as citizens of one state and one country we can surely unite in a common desire to see all the people of our state and our country in the full enjoyment of the largest measure of prosperity.

"And without respect to political policies, we can rejoice here today that the season of business depression, of business anxiety is at an end. The misfortunes of the last few years will long be remembered. Bank failures, commercial failures, industrial activities curtailed or suspended, capital hiding in fear, labor and the products of labor crowding the markets, all cast their shadows in the lives of this generation and across a page of its history.

"Already we are foremost among the nations of the earth in agriculture, and in mines and mining and stand a close second in manufacturing and commerce.... But with all this wonderful material development and marvelous acquisition of wealth, and indeed in part induced by it, we are confronted today by problems fraught with as great dangers to the welfare of the nation and the integrity of its government as any which have taxed the genius and courage of the American people in the years that have passed."²⁵

25 Clippings, Milwaukee Journal, Sept. 24, 1897.

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An analysis of the central appeals and symbols used by LaFollette in his oratory is now possible. Roughly they may be classified as an appeal to patriotism; an appeal to resentment; and an appeal to political reform. For our purposes it is not essential to know whether LaFollette was conscious of the purposes to be gained by such appeals. Rather, we are interested in classifying them for the purpose of learning what effect and influence specific appeals might have on citizens during that period.

Most political orators have their own unique brand of flag-waving. LaFollette's use of patriotism was an appeal to the Jeffersonian spirit of democracy: equality of rights and opportunity, freedom against injustice and privilege. In other speeches LaFollette made frequent references to the sacrifices of the Revolutionary and Civil War heroes, sacrifices, he argued, which helped to safeguard precious democratic rights and liberties. The glories of the past were drawn in order to contrast more sharply the conditions of the present. Appeals to love of soil, to pride in democratic institutions and to pride in superior material prosperity of the country were used to implement this plea for patriotism. The moral lesson contained in such an appeal was that 'vigilance is the watchword of liberty.'

The appeal to resentment was two-fold. In part it appears as an attempt to invoke the bitter memories of the depression of the early 1890's. By recalled the bleak picture

of unemployment, and exploitation of labor, farmer and small business groups LaFollette could hope to mobilize latent resentment against economic and channelize it for his own purposes.

The complementary aspect to the economic resentment was an implicit appeal to the bourgeois code of ethics: honesty and integrity in personal conduct, equality of opportunity, forthrightness in public affairs, obedience to law and respect for the democratic processes.²⁶ It was this

26 See John Hallowell, The Decline of Liberalism (Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1940).

brand of morality which LaFollette accused corporations and their hirelings -- management and legislators -- of disregarding and violating. Resentment against 'Robber Barons' and 'Robber Baron morality' was the central and key appeal used by LaFollette in his numerous stump speeches.

The remedy for LaFollette was caucus reform, the primary election. This was an appeal to action that could gain adherents among those who, believing that something 'should be done', preferred the slower evolutionary method of reform and who hopefully believed that such reform would be a cure-all. Whereas the other two appeals were oriented to abstract value attitudes, the reform appeal was directed to a specific positive program. However, that form of action could be subscribed to by the public only if there were certain pre-

existing values and attitudes.

Through caucus reform LaFollette claimed that the infinite bounties and goodness of the country would be given back to the people; primary elections would reestablish a government of the people, for the people, and by the people.

The question then arises, what evidence is there that these appeals were effectively used? Although less information was available on this question than on evidence pertaining to the image of LaFollette, it is possible to gain some insight into the effectiveness of appeals by (a) an examination of the reaction of crowds, as reported by the press, and (b) by the emphases given to parts of LaFollette's speeches in the press reports.

The Mineral Point Tribune on June 14, 1897 carried the following editorial entitled 'Bob's Warning':

"Mr. LaFollette warned the people that the liberties enjoyed through the sacrifices of the revolutionary fathers and the heroes and statesmen of the civil war were to be preserved by the people from the assaults of an enemy more dangerous than foreign war or armed rebellions. That enemy was corporate power which today dominates political parties dictating legislation, perverting administration and even influencing judicial action...For their own protection, he called upon his audience to give closer and more earnest attention to their duties in their caucuses and conventions of their respective parties as the only means at hand for the defense of the people's liberties until they can secure the legislature that is not machine-made, and then we may confidently

expect faithful public service from
public officials." 27

27 Clippings, June 14, 1897.

The Chicago Record, reporting on the Waukesha speech of LaFollette, stated:

"Ex-Congressman Robert LaFollette today delivered an address at the Waukesha county fair which will attract attention all over the state. In the first place, it pours a broadside into the republican machine and attacks domination of political affairs by corporations. LaFollette is the recognized leader of a strong faction in the party which is now in open rebellion against the present leaders -- a faction that was so strong at the last state convention that it required the combined forces of the other candidates to prevent his receiving the nomination for governor. The address delivered today is the first gun in a battle that the Madison man will wage all winter...The address was listened to by a great crowd, and the speaker was frequently interrupted by applause." 28

28 Ibid., Chicago Record, Aug. 28, 1897.

The Milwaukee Journal on September 4, of 1897, gave a glowing report on the speech delivered by LaFollette at the Eau Claire county fair.

"A crowd of about 3,000 people heard ex-Congressman Robert LaFollette of Madison at the Eau Claire county fair at Augusta yesterday afternoon. He was introduced by C. E. Bradford, as one who had been and promised to be mighty in the shaping of the

affairs of this country. Mr. LaFollette received a hearty reception. He was in fine form and speech, though he spoke under disadvantage, having to face a blazing sun. The marked interest and lively discussion he has stirred up has caused him to put in manuscript his address, and in opening he announced that he had set his words upon paper as he wished to arm himself against 'unjust criticism.' 'I cannot afford', he said, 'to be misrepresented or misconstrued,' and added that what he said he would stand by not only today, tomorrow, next year, but for the years to come...

"In forcible language he pictured the standing of the United States with that of other countries, showing the growth of representative government, the heritage bequeathed by the heroes of Lexington, Bunker Hill and Valley Forge, and saved by their sons, the heroes of the Wilderness and of Atlanta to the Sea... He felt that as his hearers loved their country they should consider great problems that were now at the very front, they should ask themselves the question, 'Have we got a representative government today?'...

"As a great cause of the unrest was the growing contest of corporations and he followed somewhat closely the ideas expressed in his Waukesha speech, becoming if anything more denunciatory and more intensely in earnest.

"The machine in politics was handled in vigorous style and western Wisconsin hearers seemed as much effected as did those who heard him across the state. Not only did he denounce the legislature and administration of Illinois, but he dwelt severely upon the misdeeds of our own.

"He said that since he delivered that speech he had been criticized, some had used the word 'demagogue' and that his talk was like that used at the Haymarket years ago. Here he showed as evidence that the dangers he would give warning of were felt by others and he read the resolution passed at Cleveland, Ohio, by the recent national convention of the American Bar Association, looking to

investigation of trusts and to advancement of laws that would reach the subject.

"The speech was for more than an hour and a half, being continued on appeals to 'go on'. At its conclusion The Journal correspondent was able to hear a great deal of comment in the crowd. That it was an eloquent address no one denied but several old line party men as a rule, with a shake of the head would say, 'It's more than half true but what can be done?'. A few held that there seemed to be more politics in it than they cared for at a county fair, but the majority seemed to be with the speaker heart and hand, and if no other immediate result is shown there will certainly be a power of thinking done."²⁹

29 Clippings, Milwaukee Journal, Sept. 4, 1897.

A similar story was reported by The Journal on LaFollette's address to the Wisconsin state fair.

"It was a small but enthusiastic crowd that heard Mr. LaFollette. He scored but few new points and those who have read his speeches at various county fairs through the state this fall can form a fair idea of the address. But they cannot get from them any fair impression of the intense energy and force of his delivery. He is a young steam engine and carries his hearers with him by the very force of his energetic oratory. There was no lack of applause and appreciation of his effort. As he drew the familiar picture of the grand possibilities of development yet remaining to the people of this country and reached the climax of his propositions, he was cheered to the echo.

"When he made his point that the real basis of all the effort, all the blood and treasure of the war was to re-establish and plant upon firmer ground the great principle that every man should be equal before the law, there was an outburst of applause. All

through the address he kept the audience with him closely.

"Again, when he declared that the basic principle of our government was the will of the people, he put into the words a new force and brought from his audience a fresh outburst."³⁰

30 Clippings, Milwaukee Journal, Sept. 24, 1897.

A keen analysis of LaFollette's Menace of the Machine speech was made by the Milwaukee Sentinel on September 25, of that year.

"Mr. LaFollette's speech at the State Fair yesterday was written to be heard, not to be read... In outline, the speech is as follows: personal liberty is our dearest possession. We have fought for it again and again. We are now in danger of losing it. Why? Because corporations, which evade taxes and overcharge the people, have got us by the throat. Why have they got us by the throat? Because our lawmakers are corrupt. Why are our lawmakers corrupt? Because they are nominated by the machinery of caucuses and conventions. And the implication is this: replace the present machine by something better.

"The merit of Mr. LaFollette's speech is its description, in popular style, of the iniquities of which corporations have been guilty. His account of the operations of the coal trust is clear and striking. His people cannot read it, unless they are already well informed, without finding that their dislike of the coal trust is sharpened. One might even say that Mr. LaFollette's function is to supply average men, who are discontented with corporations, with reasons for their discontent.

"His chief demerits are two. He does not distinguish sharply between the evils which come from the personal dishonesty of

managers of corporations; the evils which come from corruption of legislators; the evils which some observers think inevitable so long as corporations exist, no matter how incorruptible legislators may be, or how honest the corporation managers, and which other men think it possible to correct without destroying the incontestable usefulness of corporations; and the results whose nature is still in disrepute, some men regarding them as unmitigated evils and others as, upon the whole likely to do more good than harm.

"The second principal defect in his speech is, does not Mr. LaFollette tend to make his hearers believe that the mere election of incorruptible legislators will not only remove those evils which are due to corruption, but also solve all the problems which have been brought up by the spread of the corporate form? The question is not so simple.

"No one ought to blame Mr. LaFollette because he tends to make his hearers discontented. There is in machine politics, in the bought favor of legislators to corporations, in the flagrant inequality of taxation, much that may well occasion a 'noble discontent'. But Mr. LaFollette is in this a dangerous guide, that he tends to make his hearers believe that some of the most harassing problems of the day may be settled by the abolition of bribery and that caucus reform will do more for the human race than any possible reform can do.

"Of course a man whose speeches have this tendency may be quite disinterested and high-minded. But friends of Mr. LaFollette may none the less remind him that he might be equally effective and appear far more sensible, if he would discriminate a little, leave out his patches of rhetoric, and not lead his followers to entertain extravagant hopes of the results to be accomplished by caucus reform." 31

31 Clippings, Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 25, 1897.

An editorial denouncing the demagogic tactics resorted to by the LaFollette resurgents states:

"Months ago it was determined by LaFollette's friends in the Sentinel office that a sentiment must be fostered in this city along the lines of Populism, for Milwaukee would be the starting point, if the Madison man and his lieutenants were to win next year. To do this a Republican of Populistic leanings must be provided with something in the shape of a platform that he could stand upon. It must appear to be of the independent or 'citizen' order; and to do this well something must be put up to be whacked at. What better could the plotters do than select Henry J. Baumgartner for the one and he Milwaukee Electric for the other.... The Sentinel could in this way gratify a personal spite of some of its gang, and at the same time build up a following for the theorists -- the single taxers, the old-fashioned 'Pops', and also bring to its assistance some of the men who, in 1896, were saturated with the movement for silver at 16 to 1 and against the courts... (the people of Wisconsin) will be told that the leaders of the Republican party are opposed to corporations and Henry J. Baumgartner and Robert M. LaFollette will be pointed to as such leaders. These men will pose as the only truly good and honest friends of the workingman and farmer. They will be pointed to as Bryan is pointed to, as the Moses who has come to rescue them.

"The LaFollette machine has for its motto, 'Down with the Corporations.'"
32

32 Clippings, Chicago Inter-Ocean, Jan. 24, 1900.

In summary, we may state that LaFollette's appeal to patriotism was very effective with the crowds, who, unlike our modern audiences, had a naive youthful enthusiasm for their country and the ideals of their founding fathers.

For them the flag and Civil War battles symbolized the democratic liberties which they had struggled to preserve. These symbols were charged with content and meaning, which a clever leader could (and did) effectively utilize.

When LaFollette pointed out that corporations and corrupt politicians were guilty of perverting democracy, of destroying the fundamental precepts of justice and equality, he struck a responsive chord in his audience. Other leaders had played upon the same chord, but LaFollette's virtue was that he harmonized it with a belief in democracy, bourgeois ethics, and with a constructive program which could gain adherents among the middle class groups in Wisconsin.

The climax to his speech, the plea for caucus reform, appears to have been the weakest of the appeals. This may be partly explained on logical grounds. Caucus reform was LaFollette's solution to democracy's dilemma. But, as the Milwaukee Journal editorial stated, it was not the only solution nor an adequate solution to all the evils LaFollette had outlined.

PART II

Theoretical Formulation of Problem

The concept of 'charisma', as developed by Max Weber, may be a useful analytical tool in understanding LaFollette in his role as political reformist leader. Weber's formulation of the concept is as follows:

"The term charisma will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinarymen and treated as endowed with superhuman powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader."¹

1 Max Weber, Theory of Social and Economic Organization. Part I of Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, translated from the German by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons. (Revised, edited, mimeographed). p. 258.

Charisma is regarded as an unusual or extraordinary personal trait, a "personal gift of grace", which is not

2 From Max Weber, Essays in Sociology, translated, edited and with an introduction by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 79.

shared by others.

The existence of charismatic authority is evidenced by

the devotion and confidence of a group, which, because of its loyalty, is of the nature of a 'discipleship'. The relationship is what Cooley would term "personal ascendancy" or "executive force"; "authority to dominate the minds of others...inspiring a sense of reverence and a tendency to believe and follow."³

3 Charles Horton Cooley, Human Nature and the Social Order (revised edition), (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922), pp. 328-329.

"What is alone important is how the individual is actually regarded by those subject to charismatic authority, by his 'followers' or 'disciples'... It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma...Psychologically this 'recognition' is a matter of complete personal devotion to the possessor of this quality arising out of enthusiasm, or of despair and hope."⁴

4 Weber, Theory of Social and Economic Organization, pp. 258-259.

Thus charisma, a gift of grace, exists by the grace of recognition of followers -- that is, their belief in the exceptional qualities of the leader. As long as the leader receives recognition and is able to satisfy the followers of disciples he retains his authority.

The charismatic leader is personally accepted as the truly 'called' leader of men and the latter do not obey him

because of custom or statute but because they believe in
⁵ him. In this respect, charismatic authority is "sharply

5 Weber, Essays in Sociology, p. 79.

opposed both to rational, and particularly bureaucratic, authority, and to traditional authority...and is specifically
⁶ irrational in the sense of being foreign to all rules."

6 Weber, Theory of Social and Economic Organization, pp. 260-261.

A final characteristic of charisma is worthy of mention for our purposes. The charismatic leader, by virtue of his cause or 'calling', by the devotion of his following, and by the fact that his authority is extra-legal or non-traditional (in contrast to princes, nobles, bureaucrats, etc.) is a threat to organized institutions for he repudiates the past. In this sense charismatic authority is a "specifically
⁷ revolutionary force."

7 Ibid., p. 261.

Because of these elements implicit in the concept, charisma operates as a strong irrational force in the determination of group behavior. The authority of a leader is derived from the devotion of his following, rather than from traditional or legal prestige of office, and is opposed to

tradition and prescribed rules of action.

Admittedly, the classification of charismatic authority, as applied by Weber, embraces a broad category of leaders including prophets, war lords, magicians, parliamentary leaders, etc. For that reason the concept cannot be applied too rigidly to a political leader in a Western democracy and yield predictive results. Its main utility lies in focussing our attention on the differences and contrasts in types of leadership authority. The degree to which a leader approximates the 'ideal' type is not of as great import for the purposes of this paper as the degree to which the leader is isolated, differentiated from other leaders because of his proximity to one or another types of authority.⁸

8 The salient characteristics of charisma, mentioned above, by no means exhaust the definition, but they are the aspects that appear most fruitful for constructing a political type that could be validly applied to LaFollette.

On the basis of the evidence offered in Part I of this paper, it is now possible to construct a political type. LaFollette, because of the recognition of his uniqueness, the exceptional qualities attributed to him by his devoted followers, may be termed a 'charismatic leader'. Operating outside the political 'ring', advocating doctrines that were unacceptable to the party bosses, he derived his authority and prestige from factors other than patronage or

9

tradition. LaFollette's cause and calling, political

- 9 Of course, this analysis implies a comparison of LaFollette with other political leaders. Because of the limitations of time and space such a comparison, a necessary correlate, will have to await some other student's thought and interest.
-

reform, became identified by the press and citizens as LaFollette's Cause. The quotation of Albert Barton is worth repeating at this point: LaFollette's "remarkable facility or fortune in making himself and his cause interchangeable in the public mind, making it possible for him to press his propaganda while his friends rather urged support of the
10 man."

- 10 Barton, op. cit., p. 55.
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The hypothesis which the remaining section of this paper will attempt to validate, in that light of further evidence, may be stated as follows: The voters' acceptance of LaFollette as their political reformist leader of Wisconsin in 1900 was due to two factors:

1. The recognition of his exceptional, unique qualities.
2. His effective use and manipulation of appeals.

These two factors constituted a strong effectively irrational force motivating voters' behavior, as opposed to motives of rational expediency, traditional irrationality, or sanctioned rationality.

PART III

Historical Analysis of the Appeals

For the appraisal and validation of effectiveness of appeals it would seem essential to examine the historical background of the state. An essential condition for effectiveness of appeals is that the appeals must have roots in the social structure of the period. A cause or a leader cannot emerge from a social vacuum, although to the naive observer there may appear to be no obvious aggravations existing in the situation that would produce such a phenomenon.

After attempting to define the situation in terms of the subjects, the next task of a 'detached' observer is to give a definition of the subject by those acquainted with¹ a greater knowledge of the facts. By tracing the specific

1 This formulation is borrowed from the lectures of Howard Becker.

appeals used by LaFollette to their historical roots we should gain an insight into their significance for voters in the election of 1900.

Appeal to Patriotism

The patriotic appeal deserves the least elucidation since its significance in 1900, less than fifty years after the Civil War, appears obvious. However, the important fact to recall is that the Republican Party, which emerged from the Civil War strong and victorious, was closely identified with patriotism. Not only was the Republican Party fortified by an intense patriotism but "millions of farmers of the West owed their homes to its generous policy of giving away public lands. Never had a party had its foundations on interest ramifying throughout such a large portion of society."² These factors help to explain the dominance of the

2 Charles Beard, Contemporary American History (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1914), p. 91.

Republican party in Wisconsin and the reason why LaFollette persisted in his attempts to gain power as a Republican.

Only twice during the period from 1855 to 1900 were Democratic Governors elected to office in the state. The first occasion was the election of Governor Taylor in 1874 when the Democrats and Granger reformers agreed upon a fusion ticket.³ The second victory for the Democrats was the

3 S. J. Buck, The Granger Movement (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1913).

election in 1900 of George W. Peck, (incidentally, author of

Peck's Bad Boy) which resulted from a piece of school legislation passed by the Republicans and resented by the foreign and Catholic voters of the state.⁴

4 Allan Fraser Lovejoy, LaFollette and the Direct Primary (New Haven: Yale University, 1941), p. 21.

Appeal to Resentment

To trace the origins of the appeal to resentment will be more difficult since it involves more judgement and discretion in the selection of pertinent data. However, an attempt will be made to present an adequate though brief explanation of the historical soil upon which such an appeal could grow.

According to the analysis of appeals, mentioned in the previous section of the paper, the resentment appeal was twofold: the substantive component in resentment -- i.e., anger against economic and political 'exploitation'; and the ideological aspect -- i.e., resentment against Robber Baron morality.

A study of economic and political conditions affecting the middle class, especially the farmer, may sharpen our focus on this problem.

Economic Conditions -- A Basis for Resentment

In the decades following the Civil War the population of the state considerably increased due to several

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factors: the generous land policy of the Republican

- 5 According to the Wisconsin Blue Book for 1901, page 671, the population of the state in 1860 was 775,881; for 1870 it was 1,054,670; in 1880 the population increased to 1,315,497; in 1890 to 1,686,880; and in 1900, 2,069,042. From 1880 to 1900 there was a 51% increase in population.
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party; the influx of immigrants, particularly from Germany
6 and Norway; growth of lumber industry in northern section

- 6 A table showing percentage of increase of native born, and foreign born in the state. (Source, Wisconsin Blue Book, 1901, p. 499).

Percentage of Increase of	Native Born	Foreign Born
1850-1860	156%	151%
1860-1880	70%	43%
1880-1895	42%	29%

of the state; and the extension of transportation to the northern and western areas of the state.

The mania for railroad construction during this period developed out of this real need for transportation facilities. However, it was not long before a new type of promoter emerged who attempted to build railroads without capital of his own and at the expense of the people. Not only did towns, counties and the state aid railroad construction with loans, donations of bonds, and grants of land but the promoters enticed farmers, along the right of

way, to buy a share in the company.⁷ Many unsuspecting

7 Buck, op. cit., p. 10.

farmers purchased these shares by mortgaging their farms.⁸

8 An investigation into the records of eight counties of Wisconsin disclosed about 1300 of these (railroad) mortgages amounting to more than a million and a half dollars. R. E. Smith, The Wisconsin Granger Movement, (Master's Thesis).

These farmers expected to get profitable returns on the stock, sufficient to pay off their mortgage, and at the same time they hoped to assist in the creation of a highway which would enable them to market their products more readily and profitably.

But the farmer was disappointed in both of his expectations. The dividends on stock were non-existent and the new transportation "was not cheap enough to offset the increased competition. As a result of the operations of construction rings and unscrupulous directors many of these roads went thru receiverships and reorganizations in the course of which the stock purchased by the farmer who had invested with a view to the development of the country thus found himself with a mortgage on his land, his railway stock worthless and the expected advantages from the road a chimera. His taxes, moreover, were increased by the investment or donation which his town or

county had made for the same purpose. This was one of the principal causes which operated to produce a somewhat blind antagonism among the agricultural population towards railroads and everything connected with them."⁹

9 Buck, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

Such a legitimate grievance against railroads was aggravated by two other factors: the agreements between the various trunk lines for the maintenance of rates, made necessary by the ruinous rate wars; the general disregard of the convenience of travelers and shippers who were subjected to numerous discourtesies and injuries; absentee ownership of railroads, a fact interpreted by many people as responsible for gross abuses of railroads; the influence exerted by railroads over legislators and public officials by the free pass system and a subtle form of bribery consisting of transfer of valuable stock to legislators at a price considerably below market value;¹⁰ and the "complaints against discriminations in

10 The literature dealing with this period in Wisconsin politics is replete with stories illustrating the abuses of the pass system. For complete references see Barton's Winning of Wisconsin.

rates between places, or charging higher rates at intermediate points than at points where competition in the shape of other roads or water routes prevailed; and discrimination between

persons, or giving better terms to certain favored individuals or firms than were enjoyed by the general public."¹¹

¹¹ Buck, op. cit., p. 14.

Rebates and secret rates were almost always in favor of the large and powerful shipper.

Another factor of interest was that the farmers in Wisconsin were for years handicapped by their notion that wheat raising was the profitable enterprise, rather than the more intensive and diversified agriculture which was not generally adopted until the early seventies. The westward tendency of the wheat industry was resisted by the recalcitrant farmers who were determined to continue their one-crop production. Not until the competition from the virgin wheat fields of the West and the depressed economic conditions of the late sixties made wheat raising unprofitable did the majority of Wisconsin farmers change to the more profitable stock raising and dairy farming.¹²

12 This transition was accelerated by the influx of German, Swiss and Norwegian farmers who were familiar with the diversified and soil-saving type of agriculture from their European background.)

Meanwhile the farmers of Wisconsin, already burdened with debt but unable to understand that their own resistance and lack of progressiveness were partly to fault, were quick to fasten blame for their misfortunes on the bankers, rail-

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ways, legislatures, tariff, monopolies. Although the

- 13 Buck, op. cit., p. 8. According to the U. S. Twelfth Census: 1900, the number of gallons of milk sold increased more than eight fold from the period 1880 to 1900. In 1870 there were 2,059,105 gallons of milk sold; in 1880, 25,156,977 gallons; and in 1900, the astonishing increase in volume to 252,450,051 gallons of milk.
-

transition to diversified farming improved their economic condition the rationalizations of farmers, projected to railroads and monopoly, persisted.

According to data obtained from the U.S. Census for the years 1890 and 1900 there was a slight increase in the proportion of encumbered or mortgaged farm homes for that decade. In 1890 37% of the farm homes were owned encumbered, 50% owned free and 13% hired. In 1900 40% of the farm homes were owned encumbered, 47% owned free and 13% hired.

- 14 U. S. Twelfth Census, 1900, Volume II, Population, Part II.

The states who in 1900 had a higher proportion of encumbered farm homes than Wisconsin included Minnesota, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Kansas, Illinois, Nebraska, and Iowa (in rank order). Therefore, in relation to other midwestern states Wisconsin had the lowest proportion of debt-ridden farms.

Regarding the value of farm products for the state, there was a considerable increase in money value of products from the period 1880 to 1900. The figures on value of farm products in Wisconsin for those years, are, respectively:

1880, \$72,779,496 or approximately \$73 million dollars; in 1890, \$70,990,645 or about \$71 million dollars; and in 1900, \$157,445,713 or \$157 $\frac{1}{2}$ million dollars.

15 U. S. Twelfth Census: 1900, vol. 5, Agriculture Part I, p. 703.

These figures illustrate that the condition of the farmer had considerably improved in the twenty year period, 1880 to 1900, and that the increase in value of products largely nullified the slight increase in proportion of mortgaged property, even though the interest rate on such mortgages was generally high. The problem of debts recedes when the income of a farmer is sufficient to pay off interest charges.

From the evidence gathered it would be untrue to say that the condition of the Wisconsin farmer was retrograding during the decades following the Civil War. Nevertheless, the farmers believed that they were not advancing so rapidly as the other classes.¹⁶ This belief was strengthened by

16 "The fact was, their standard of living was advancing nearly, if not quite, as rapidly as that of other ranks of society, while their incomes were not increasing in the same proportion." Buck, op. cit., p. 1.

their observation of corporate wealth, and 'moneyed' politics. In the words of Thomas and Znaniecki, "If men define situations

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as real, they are real in their consequences."

17 W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, The Polish Peasant in Europe and America (1 vol. ed., New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927 -- 1st printing, 1918), p. 79.

Political Conditions -- A Basis for Resentment

From the beginning of the state's settlement there developed a partnership between politics and big business, "The lumber interests and the railroads dividing up the legislative offices among themselves and the lesser
18 interests." The exposure of the railroad bond scandal of

18 Barton, op. cit., p. 35.

the Barstow administration, 1853-1857, had prevented a repetition of similar transactions, but the practical gifts of large tracts of public domain to railroads and lumber interests continued unabashed. In later years a trio, composed of the municipal boss of Milwaukee, and the state chairman of the two political parties, influenced legislative operations of the state. As spoils, each man was given charge of one of the three principal public utility monopolies of
19 Milwaukee.

19 See Ibid., pp. 34-36.

The attitude of the railroads and key politicians in this 'Golden Era' was that railroads could do no wrong.

Their rights were held superior not only to those of individuals but to the whole public. The statement of two leading railroad officials toward the passage of the Granger legislation, regulating railroad rates in 1874, was typical. We "disregard so much of the law as attempts to fix an arbitrary rate of compensation for freight and passengers."²⁰

20 Statement cited by Barton, op. cit., p. 38.

The scandal involving state Republican treasurers has already been noted in the introduction to the paper. Such abuses of political stewardship were not uncommon, but, rather, were forms of 'political graft, ancient and time honored.'

The state senatorship, deemed one of the most attractive political offices, was usually given to the man with the greatest political influence and money. Lincoln Steffens, reporting on his conversation with Isaac Stephenson, a rich old lumberman from Marinette and a former associate of Sawyer, stated: "Once he and Sawyer were comparing notes on the cost to them of United States senatorship. 'Isaac', said Sawyer, 'how much did you put in to 'get' the legislature for Spooner that time?'

"It cost me about \$22,000, Philetus. How much did you put in?"

"Why", said Sawyer surprised, 'it cost me \$30,000.

I thought it cost you thirty.'

"No, it cost me thirty to get it for you when you
21
ran."

21 L. Steffens, "Enemies of the Republic" (McClure's Magazine, October, 1904).

Domination of politics by corporate interests was managed through a party machine or 'system.' "The system... is a reorganization of the political and financial powers of the state by which, for hoodle of one sort or another, the leading politicians conduct the government in the interest of those leading businesses which seek special privileges and pay for them with bribes and the 'moral' support of graft. And a "safe man" is a man who takes his ease, honors and orders, lets the boss reign, and makes no trouble for the
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System." By many devices, i.e., gifts of railroad

22 Ibid., p. 565.

shares, free pass system, 'fixing' of legislators, and delegates to caucuses, the will of the people could be thwarted to make a mockery of government of the people and for the people. Thus the manifold grievances against such perverted democracy were well-founded.

Middle-class Character of State -- A basis for
Resentment

Resentment against such corruption and manipulation could only find root among people who adhered to other values. The discontent would only make sense if there was an alternative set of values believed to be correct and just. These values, honesty and integrity in personal conduct, forthrightness in public affairs, equality of opportunity for every individual, obedience to law and respect for democratic processes, are the traditional ethics of the middle-class. They are the ethics which have colored the American scene since its founding, and have been most dominant among the rural and small town population.

A brief analysis of the population of the state in 1900 will reveal more clearly the predominance of middle class groups.

For the year 1900 58% of the population was living in rural areas and villages; and 42% was residing in cities.²³

23 United States Twelfth Census: 1900, Vol. I.

Of the total number of persons engaged in gainful occupation for that year, 37% were in agricultural pursuits; 4% in professional service; 20% engaged in domestic and personal service; 24% in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits; and 14% in trade and transportation.²⁴ Although it is difficult

24 Ibid.

to make an arbitrary breakdown for determining class lines, we can gather from the data that there was a small percentage of workers engaged in manufacturing and a large proportion of people in the 'middle-class' occupations -- agriculture, trade, professions, personal service. The rural character of the population would also indicate the numerical superiority of the middle-class to other classes in the population.

Appeal to Political Reform

The third appeal used by LaFollette was to political reform, including abolition of the free pass system and establishment of the direct primary. The novel features in such an appeal were the specific plan of action, caucus reform, and the fact that a Republican was championing the reform cause. Other reformists had preceded LaFollette, like Jesus was heralded by the Hebrew prophets. Reform was not a new idea but only the unique character it assumed under LaFollette's leadership was novel.

A brief explanation of the reform movements preceding LaFollette will highlight his appearance on the reform stage.

Granger Movement -- Precedent for Reform

The major upsurge of reform in Wisconsin was the Granger movement. Its climax came in 1874-76 when the

Patrons of Husbandry were able to have the Wisconsin legislature enact, in the face of a powerful lobby, the Potter law, better known as the Granger laws. Gov. Taylor, the successful candidate of the Democratic and Reform tickets, resisted the demands of the railroads who served notice of their intention to disregard the law. He started proceedings in the Supreme Court to annul the charters of the railroads and sought an injunction to prevent them from disobeying the law.

Meanwhile the press of the state, friendly to the railroad interests, pursued a merciless campaign against Taylor, United States Senator Matt H. Carpenter and the Potter law.²⁵ Despite the fact that the Courts upheld the

25 Governor Taylor was accused of petty bribery and called 'Ten-Dollar Bill'. Matt Carpenter, who anticipated the Supreme Court's decision upholding the legislation, was denounced as 'Matt, the Robber', 'the American Karl Marx'; and the papers wrote sneering editorials about 'Potter rails', 'Potter cars', 'Potter service'. See Barton, op. cit., p. 40.

constitutionality of the Granger legislation, thus affirming the power of the state over corporations which it creates, the damaging effects of newsmongering resulted in the narrow defeat of Governor Taylor in the next election. The Republicans, regaining complete control of the legislature, repealed the Potter law in 1876, thus effectively ending the Granger movement in Wisconsin.

Barton, in an evaluation of Gov. Taylor stated, "Taylor was a strong man of his time. He had certain excellent qualities, stubborn honesty and high courage, but lacked in the best qualities of leadership... He had not the genius to fuse the variant disorganized support he first received into an effective fighting machine, nor had he the constructive ability later so strikingly shown by LaFollette in a similar situation in building his reforms wisely and well upon basic essentials. So, while he fought his good fight to victory, he was unable to make secure its fruits and the 'anti-railroad' movement suffered such a repudiation and set back that it took thirty years to regain the ground
²⁶
he had won and lost."

26 Barton, op. cit., p. 41.

Reform Parties as Third Parties

The later reformist parties in Wisconsin included the Greenback Party (the Granger Party), the Prohibition group, the Peoples' party, Union Labor party, Socialist Labor, and Social Democrats of America. None of them attained any degree of importance in the state. After 1890 the combined vote for the reform party gubernatorial candidates in any one election never exceeded 10% of the total vote.²⁷ Except for the year 1894, the Prohibition party

27 The Wisconsin Blue Book, 1901, p. 382.

revealed the greatest relative strength of these protest groups. The Peoples' Party, better known as the Populist movement, polled 25,604 votes in 1894, or about 7% of the total vote. The increased strength of the Populist party for that year may be explained by the effect of the severe depression of 1893.

Although space does not permit an adequate analysis of the factors accounting for the failure in Wisconsin of the two major reform parties -- the Prohibition party and Peoples' party -- a few major points may be raised. Their inability to develop leadership and a strong organization may be due to first, an emphasis on single appeals, in one case, prohibition and in the other, free silver; their lack of prestige compared to the two dominant political parties; the relative prosperity of the state which operated against militant economic reforms; and the exclusive group character of their appeals directed to the farmer, laborer or abstentionist.

A.R. Hall, Prophet for LaFolletteism

The major prophet for LaFollette was a Republican reformist, A. R. Hall, from the town of Knapp, Wisconsin. Elected to the legislature in 1890, he was a consistent advocate of abolition of the free pass system and regulation of railroads throughout the decade of the nineties. Although opposed and ridiculed by the Republican machine and press,

the people of his district continued to support him and his reforms.

Lincoln Steffens wrote of him, "So far as I can make out, some of the modern measures labeled LaFolletteism sprang from the head of a certain lean, clean Vermont farmer... He is a man. I have seen in my day some seventeen men, real men, and none of them is simpler, truer, braver than this ex-leader of the Wisconsin assembly; none thinks he is more of a failure and none is more of a success."²⁸

28 Steffens, op. cit.

Through the persistent efforts of A. R. Hall and LaFollette the Republican convention in 1898 declared in its platform in favor of the abolition of the free pass system. Finally, in 1899 Hall managed to get his bill passed in the legislature prohibiting the acceptance of railroad passes, sleeping-car passes, telegraph and express company franks. Thus the Republican machine was forced to publicly acknowledge the worth of certain reform measures as a result of the efforts of the reform advocates within the party. Some of LaFollette's thunder was stolen by the party before he emerged victorious in the 1900 election.

PART IV

Analysis of the Gubernatorial Election of 1900

A. Examination of the Election Returns for Governor in 1900.

In the election for governor of that year five candidates were running: LaFollette for the Republicans; Louis G. Bomrich for Democrats; J. Burritt Smith as the Prohibitionist party candidate; Howard Tuttle for the Social Democrats; and Frank R. Wilke as the Socialist Labor party candidate. The total vote for all candidates was 440,897, the highest vote polled for any gubernatorial election with the exception of the year 1896 when the Bryan Democrats gave the republicans a hard fight.

The proportion of the vote for the respective candidates was as follows: LaFollette received 60% of the vote; Bomrich received 36%; Smith got 2%; Tuttle received 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ %; and Wilke only .1%.

A significant fact was that of the total number of men eligible to vote 77% voted, a high proportion if we compare present day conditions.¹ Of the males 21 years and over who

1 The voting requirements in the state made it possible for almost all men to participate in elections. Those who could vote included "any citizen of the United States or alien who has declared intention, and civilized Indians who have severed tribal relations, resident of State one year and of town or precinct ten days. Excluded from voting: persons under guardianship, non compos mentis, insane, convicted of treason or felony, betting on election." Wisconsin Blue Book: 1901, p. 715.

were eligible to vote in 1900 54% were native white and 45% foreign white. The native white group may be further subdivided into native white of native parents, 22%, and native white of foreign parents, 33%.

Percentage of Wisconsin Males in 1900
eligible to vote

Native White of Native Parents	Native White of Foreign Parents	Foreign White of Foreign Parents
22%	33%	45%
22% of native stock	78% of ethnic stock	

By this classification we can observe the high proportion, 78%, of the voting population who came from foreign stock.

LaFollette won 66 counties of Wisconsin and lost in only four; Calumet, Dodge, Jefferson and Kewaunee. All four were counties that had previously voted Democratic in elections, although there was a decline in the democratic plurality received in 1900 in all except Calumet county. It is also of interest to note that these counties had a high proportion of German foreign-born. The following table will illustrate the distribution.

Proportion of Native and Foreign Born Voters
in Four Counties of Wisconsin²

<u>Counties</u>	<u>Native Born Voters</u>	<u>Foreign Born Voters</u>
Calumet	46%	54% (of this ethnic group 85% were German)
Dodge	47%	53% (of this ethnic group 85% German)
Jefferson	49%	51% (of this ethnic group 83% German)
Kewaunee	28%	72% (of this ethnic group 32% German, 43% Bohemian)

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- 2 Material on ethnic distribution of population of Wisconsin is based on two sources: (1) a study of the 1905 census "Cultural-Ethnic Backgrounds in Wisconsin", Vol. I, directed by George A. Hill of the Rural Sociology Department of the University of Wisconsin, July 30, 1940. This material is organized according to heads of families rather than general population figures. (2) The data on percentage of native and foreign born voters in the respective counties was gathered from my examination of the United States Twelfth Census: 1901. Since voting was confined to males 21 years of age and over, it seemed reasonable to use the data on heads of families as an approximation of the same. Heads of families in almost all cases included the male head of the house who earned the livelihood for the family. The distortion which might result from using data from two different periods, 1900 and 1905, will not be considerable since there was little change in the population of the state during this five year period.
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The difficulties in assessing the votes received by LaFollette are considerable. First, his plurality (102,745) was the largest ever received by a governor of the state prior to that time; the vote was predominantly (60%) Repub-

lican; the counties in which he lost were traditionally Democratic.

The pertinent questions to be raised are these: Was LaFollette strong with any particular ethnic group, especially the Germans or Norwegians? Was LaFollette's strength confined to the rural population or did he poll a considerable vote in cities? If so, what cities were important? What evidence is there that LaFollette appealed to non-Republican voters, particularly the Democrats?

Time does not permit a thorough analysis for differentiating LaFollette's vote from a vote for the Republican party. Such a study is necessary for determining the force of effective irrationality motivating voters' behavior, in contrast to traditional irrationality. Nevertheless we may gain some insight into this problem by an answer to the above questions.

I. LaFollette's Voting strength with Ethnic Groups

A. First, a list was compiled of the townships (36) where 88% or more of the total heads of families were of German ethnic stock.³ Then for each township the total

³ Ethnic stock includes those who are foreign born or of foreign parentage.

vote received for Democrats and Republicans was added. The following results were found: Twenty of the townships voted for the Democratic candidate for governor, and sixteen voted

for LaFollette. Out of a total of 9,476 votes polled in these German townships 4,670 were for LaFollette and 4,806 for the Democrats. This is a ratio of about 1 to 1, and reveals that LaFollette had no special appeal to Germans, as such. The claims made by certain groups that LaFollette was strong with German voters are false, although it is true that in certain German townships he received a large proportion of the vote. Attempts were made to further differentiate the vote according to the predominant religion of the area, Lutheran or Catholic. However, the data from the Religious Census of 1936⁴ could not be easily

4 See Religious Census, Vol. I, U. S. Department of Commerce.

applied to the period of 1900 without gross injury to the figures, so the religious study was abandoned. It would be interesting if such a study could be made in order to discern whether LaFollette received the support of either the German Lutherans or German Catholics.

B. The same procedure was followed for determining the appeal of LaFollette among the Norwegian group in the state. Of the three townships where 88% or more of the total family heads residing in the township were of Norwegian ethnic stock, all voted for LaFollette. Out of a total of 800 votes polled in these three townships 698 votes were for the Republicans. In other words, LaFollette received 95% of the vote in these Norwegian townships. In the township

of Coon in Vernon County, for example, 95% of the heads of families were of Norwegian stock, and 98% of the foreign born heads of families were Norwegian. LaFollette received 281 votes in that township and the democrats polled only twelve.

A comparison of the 1900 republican vote with the 1898 vote reveals that these townships were supporting LaFollette not simply the Republican party. Out of a total of 601 votes cast for governor that year, 417 were for Scofield, that is about two-thirds of the vote was Republican in contrast to 95% in 1900. The total Republican plurality in these three townships increased 128% in the two year period. This evidence is a strong indication that LaFollette was popular with the Norwegian farmers.

II. LaFollette's Urban Vote in Gubernatorial Election

A study of the 115 incorporated cities in Wisconsin for 1900 revealed that the Republicans were victorious in 93 of the 115. The total vote cast for the Republican party in all 115 cities was 86,545, 32% of LaFollette's total vote. The remaining 68% came from rural areas.

When these percentages are compared with the proportion of the Wisconsin population living in cities and rural areas and villages, we find that LaFollette's vote was a fair approximation. According to the United States Census of

1901, 42% of the Wisconsin population resided in cities and 58% in villages and rural areas. Therefore LaFollette's received a slightly higher percentage of the rural vote than would result from a normal distribution of the vote.

In the city of Milwaukee alone LaFollette received 42,643 votes, almost 50% of the Republican city vote. If this city is eliminated from the total vote cast for Republicans in the state and in the cities, we would find that only 20% of LaFollette's vote was confined to the urban areas, and 80% to the rural and village area. This figure indicates that LaFollette's strength was primarily in the rural not urban areas, with the exception of Milwaukee.

A comparison of the total Republican plurality received in the 115 cities for 1900 and 1898 shows that there was a 136% increase in the Republican plurality. This would indicate that LaFollette had stronger popularity in cities than did the Republican party. However, again we must note the distortion in data due to the strong Republican plurality, 6,058, given to LaFollette in Milwaukee, previously a Democratic city. If we eliminate Milwaukee's plurality from the total we find that the Republican plurality of 1900 increased only 18% over that of 1898 in the other cities of Wisconsin.

Of the 38 cities which voted democratic in 1898, 22 or 58% of them remained democratic in 1900. However, among the 16 cities who changed from a democratic plurality in 1898 to

a republican plurality in 1900 69% (12 cities) made a considerably large gain for the Republican party. Milwaukee and Madison were the two outstanding examples.

In 1898 Milwaukee had a democratic plurality of 318 and in 1900 the city had a republican plurality of 6,058; Madison in 1898 had a democratic plurality of 483 and in the next election the republican party received a plurality of 907. Stated negatively, we find that in the thirty-eight democratic cities the republican party made considerable gains in approximately a third (12 cities).

Another factor of importance is that there were 36 republican cities where the republican plurality considerably increased over that of 1898. This makes a total of 48 cities where the popularity of LaFollette's party was augmented. These 48 cities represent 52% of the urban areas which voted republican in 1900 and thus illustrate the fact that the increased popularity of the republican party was not confined to one or two cities but, instead, was common to many (45%) of the cities of the state.

The data cautions us to be discreet in our final conclusions regarding LaFollette's strength in urban areas. Even including the vote of Milwaukee, LaFollette received less than a normal proportion of the city vote. The bulk of his vote, 68%, came from rural and village areas.

However, we do find that in the 114 cities

(Milwaukee excluded) of the state there was an 18% increase in the republican plurality for 1900 over that of 1898, and also this augmented strength of the republican party in urban areas held true for 45% (48) of the cities of the state, including 12 previously democratic cities and 38 republican cities. These cities were scattered throughout Wisconsin and included cities with a wide range in population, ethnic group composition, industries, etc.

Therefore, we may conclude the following: Although the vote for LaFollette was predominantly in the rural areas, he made considerable gains in many cities of the state. As a tentative guess, we might assume that the increased urban vote was due to the vote of the lower middle class, skilled and semi-skilled craftsmen, independent shopkeepers, and professionals. However, this is merely an assumption which would have to be validated by further examination of the election statistics in terms of wards, rent areas, etc.

III. LaFollette's Strength With Democrats

The previous analysis of the election returns in urban areas has already indicated implicitly that LaFollette had apparent popularity with some democratic voters, (who were traditionally the city dwellers.) A fair proportion (42%) of the democratic cities in 1898 changed to the republican party in 1900, and of this group 69% (12 cities) gave the republican party an appreciable increase in vote.

Among the cities voting democratic in 1900, 41% had a smaller plurality than in the previous election and only 59% had approximately the same plurality or made gains for the democratic party.

There were seven cities where the Democratic plurality increased. These included Fountain City in Buffalo county, Horicon in Dodge county, Menasha in Winnebago county, Port Washington in Ozaukee county, Two Rivers in Manitowoc county, Watertown in Jefferson county and Whitewater in Walworth county. Was there any element common to all seven cities that might explain the increase? In all cities except Whitewater there was a high proportion of the foreign born who were Germans. The following table will illustrate the distribution.

<u>City</u>	Population June 1, 1900 U.S. Census	Total No. of Heads of Fam- ilies Foreign Born	% of Foreign Born Heads of Families who were born in Germany
Horicon	1,376	166	92%
Watertown	8,437	1,132	85%
Fountain City	1,031	156	74% (plus 21% Swiss)
Port Washington	3,010	326	72%
Two Rivers	3,784	462	64%
Menasha	5,589	664	56%
Whitewater	3,405	254	24%

However, it is unwise to make generalizations regarding the influence of German voters in these cities because of two factors: First, we do not know precisely how the German element voted. Secondly, we do know that in the city of Milwaukee, with a total population of 285,315, 82% belonged to some ethnic group, that is were either foreign-born or of foreign parentage. And of the Milwaukee foreign born 62% were German and 17% Polish. And the city of Milwaukee, to recapitulate, changed from a democratic plurality to a strong republican plurality in 1900!

The problem of assigning single factors to account for the increase or decline of democratic pluralities in the cities prevents us from arriving at any startling conclusions. From the evidence offered, we can only state that LaFollette and/or the republican party drew support from among democratic voters. These democrats who became 'turncoats' were residents primarily of urban areas, but they were not confined to only the large industrial areas of the state. The degree to which democrats were willing to support LaFollette in the 1900 election no doubt varied according to the strength and vigor of their own 'machine' in contrast to the republican party's organization. For an understanding of the reasons which motivated democrats to vote for LaFollette we must look elsewhere.

5 A significant point that must not be overlooked is the problem of assessing the role of the 'independent' voter, the man with no political allegiances. It was impossible

to determine to what extent the man voting for Democrats in 1898 was a Democrat, i.e., a party follower, or merely a man who voted a protest ballot. Therefore, the fluctuations in votes from one election to the next need not indicate the 'conversion' of the voter to another party. The alteration in voting habits may be of whimsical or of protest nature, particularly in periods of transition.

B. Forms of Rationality and their relevance to Voting Behavior in Gubernatorial Election of 1900

The hypothesis of this paper is that the voters' acceptance of LaFollette resulted from irrational motivations, i.e., the recognition of his exceptional qualities and his effective manipulation of appeals. For validation of this thesis it is necessary to examine the election results of 1900 and to attempt a break-down in terms of the various types of rationality motivating voters' conduct. For our purposes the four-fold classification used by Howard Becker will be suitable.

Expedient rationality is used in the sense "that any expedient whatever may be planfully and systematically used for the achievement of the end."⁶ An illustration of expe-

6 Howard Becker, "Interpretative Sociology", an essay in Twentieth Sociology, ed. by Georges Geewitch and Wilbert E. Moore, (Philosophical Library, Inc., New York, 1945), p. 78.

dient rationality in voting would be the case of railroad managers voting for LaFollette in order to attain certain favors from him.

Sanctioned rationality prescribes the use of limited means to attain a desired end. "Ends of certain kinds do not provide sanction for any means whatsoever of their attainment."⁷ For example, a voter who believed sincerely in

7 Becker, "Interpretative Sociology", p. 79.

the class conflict could not, and be consistent, give his vote to a party representative of capitalist class interests, even though he might agree with the party's leader and the reform platform.

Traditional irrationality is marked by "a state of affairs in which actions formerly regarded as mere means become ends in themselves. Practices once of strictly utilitarian character are elevated to the level of ceremonials or rituals."⁸ The person who makes a fetish of voting a straight

8 Ibid., p. 80.

Republican ticket because his father was a Republican or because he has always voted that way represents this type of irrationality.

The fourth type, affective irrationality, is characterized by "a fairly complete fusion of means and ends,"⁹ and

9 Ibid., p. 81.

is charged with a strong dose of emotionality, i.e., affectivity. An example of affective irrational conduct would be the Democrat, who because of bitterness and resentment, voted for the Republicans -- to get even, so to speak. Another case illustrating the positive rather than negative aspect of this form of irrationality, would be the man who decided to vote for a certain leader because he was greatly impressed by the power and force of the man.

Affective irrationality does not imply that the person is working against his own interests. Very desirable ends may result from irrational conduct, ends which were not foreseen nor anticipated by the actor involved. An important distinction, however, is that one does not foresee or anticipate all the consequences of the action. Conduct that is affectively irrational is largely myopic, of the moment, immediate and is not concerned with figuring out the angles.

Very rarely do we find in conduct pure forms of any of the four types of rationality. Generally, behavior is characterized by mixture of two or three types of rationality. Irrationality "may manifest itself as an accessory of the expedient or sanctioned modes of rational conduct or as a component of irrationality of primarily traditional character."¹⁰

10 Becker, "Interpretative Sociology", p. 81.

For our purposes, conduct will be termed affectively irrational or rationally expedient, etc., when it appears that one form of rationality predominates. Such arbitrariness is necessary for the accomplishment of analysis, brevity and simplicity.

The next task of the paper will be to examine these four forms of rationality with reference to the vote given LaFollette in the election of 1900.

Rational Expediency

When the party hacks and railroad interests realized that they had no hope of defeating LaFollette in the 1900 election, many of them approached LaFollette with offers of support. However, the most implacable Stalwarts were said to have supported the Democrats. "One of the first to surrender was J. W. Babcock, Congressman and national politicians... In the case of LaFollette there was a 'misunderstanding'. In that year (1900) when everything was LaFollette, Congressman Babcock, Postmaster General Payne and others sought to bring together the great ruling special interests and the inevitable governor. LaFollette said that he would represent the corporations of the state, just as he would represent all other interests and persons; but no more. He would be 'fair'. Well, that was 'all we want', they said,
and the way seemed smooth."¹¹

11 Steffens, op. cit.

In summary, we can safely say that the railroad interests and stalwart republicans supported LaFollette for ulterior motives, that is, they wanted, first, to be on the inside track, and secondly, they expected certain favors in return for their support. Their conduct was essentially rationally expedient.

No doubt there were also a few friends, members of the clique, who supported LaFollette more because they hoped to get on the payroll than because of their loyalty to the man. However, from the evidence their number appears to be small. There were also certain non-republican voters with reformist ideas who gave LaFollette their support because they thought it expedient to play the winning horse. They realized that the reform program could be best realized under a popular candidate who was a leader of the entrenched Republican party.

Sanctioned Rationality

This type of rationality appears to be of no significance in the behavior of voters at this time. If the only alternative to LaFollette had been a strong party advocating revolutionary methods, sanctioned rationality would have been of some importance. In such a case men might have voted for the Republicans because their Christian bourgeois ethics sanctioned only legal evolutionary methods for gaining victory for reforms.

Affective Irrationality

This form of rationality is the most significant in the explanation of the tremendous support LaFollette received at the polls in 1900. Men who were primarily influenced by affective irrationality included the bulk of dirt farmers; Norwegians; the LaFollette clique, and considerable members of Democrats who resided in urban cities.

Dirt farmers: Their image of LaFollette was a man who was of the people, an ex-plough boy; a man of integrity and courage, not one to bow to the whims of the politicians or corporations; a man who was essentially an individualist, who would stand up for his rights against tremendous odds. He symbolized for the farmer his own fight against the forces of adversity.

The appeals used by LaFollette had particular implicit meanings for the farmer: Love of the soil; belief in the democratic ideals of equality, judging a man by his worth and deeds rather than by his status and wealth; the conviction that government by, of and for 'plain people' was the best government; the blind resentment against corporations, plutocracy, and those who did not earn money by the sweat of their brow but rather by machinations, intrigue, and dishonesty. LaFollette could manipulate these appeals so effectively that he impressed an audience of farmers as their natural leader.

In Cooley's terms he was able "by his mere attitude and expression of countenance to create a subtle sense of community and expectation of consent."¹² Of special significance

12 Cooley, op. cit., p. 334.

is the fact that LaFollette could gain their admiration and approval without promising special bounties to the farm group. In other words, he did not have to rely, as have present-day politicians, on promises for farm parity prices, etc. The farmers rallied to his cause out of enthusiasm and devotion to the leader and to the ideals he stood for -- defense of the common people against domination by big business, and defense of democracy against control by capital.

Norwegians: LaFollette's popularity with the Norwegians was of great significance in determining his success. As Barton has stated, "It is an interesting if not significant fact that LaFollette's propaganda first took root, and his cause received its first substantial support, among the Norwegians of Wisconsin. He was shrewd enough early to get the support of the widely read Chicago Norwegian paper Scandinaven. That his dashing effort to secure the election of Congressman Haugen as governor strengthened him immensely with the nationality is not to be doubted, but LaFollette has always been close to the Norwegian heart, for

the reason that he understands and appreciates it as do few politicians and students even within the nationality. He was brought up in a Norwegian community; he can to an extent speak the tongue, and with an almost faultless accent."¹³

13 Barton, op. cit., pp. 55-56.

Although the Norwegian farmers were traditionally Republican "their attitude toward the current issues was progressive; they agitated for lower tariffs and were active in the Granger movement."¹⁴

14 Allan Fraser Lovejoy, LaFollette and the Direct Primary (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941), p. 15.

An important factor to consider in this connection was the Norwegian love of liberty. "The Norwegian peasant has been jealous of the encroachments of privilege and power on his rights. Having long enjoyed a liberal representative form of government, the nationality is also keenly alive to its civic responsibilities and familiar with operations of government. In fact a large proportion of the immigrants from Norway have determined before 'coming over' with what political party they intend to affiliate."¹⁵

15 Barton, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

The Norwegian peasant's jealousy of encroachments on his hard-won political rights is in contrast to the majority of Germans who "guarded their personal rights more closely than their political liberties. Moreover, the Germans had settled in a far richer section of the state than did most of the Norwegians; living in a populous, wealthy district they were content to leave politics alone. The Scandinavians had settled mostly on less prosperous land and wanted a change."¹⁶

16 Lovejoy, op. cit., p. 115.

Siegfried in America Comes of Age wrote that "the Norwegian or Swedish farmer of the Northwest is a solitary introspective individual, proud and violent, like the obstinate idealists of Ibsen. To understand him we must turn back to Nordic Europe."¹⁷

17 Andre Siegfried, America Comes of Age, translated by H. H. Heming and Doris Hemming (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1927), p. 288.

All these factors -- the Norwegian love of liberty, their tradition of exercising civil responsibilities, the location of their farms in less fertile areas of the state, their proud and violent nature -- help to explain their participation in the LaFollette movement. The nationality was favorable ground for sowing the seeds of revolt against

the forces of privilege in government.

Because of LaFollette's political adroitness and unique personality he was able to establish a kinship of feeling
¹⁸
with the Norwegian group; he was considered "one of them."

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- 18 At a banquet of the Scandinavian legislators of the state in 1901, Prof. Julius Olson compared LaFollette's name to that of Tord Folleson and playfully accused LaFollette of having Norwegian blood. The conclusion of Prof. Olson's story was that Tord Folleson, the heroic standard bearer of Christianity in the battle of Ticklestad, "determined that the flag should stand even if the man had to fall. So with the governor; he, too, could be relied upon to advance the flag, even if he fell beneath it." Barton, op. cit., p. 56.
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The political consciousness of the Norwegian immigrant only served to reinforce their enthusiasm and devotion to LaFollette and his cause. Primarily, the group's voting behavior was characterized by affective irrationality.

LaFollette 'clique'

Most politicians have some type of 'machine' which is organized for the purpose of propagandizing and organizing for the leader and for the party. The members of such a machine expect in return for their time and efforts a lucrative political job if their candidate or party is successful. There need be, and frequently there is, no bond of friendship between the leader and his followers. The relationship is frankly expedient.

The LaFollette 'clique', however, was of a different nature. Up to 1900 it was characterized by an informality,

lack of political patronage and by the personal bond of friendship which existed between LaFollette and his ardent supporters. Most of them were recruited from among friends he had known during his college days at Madison, and with whom he had kept in frequent contact through correspondence. During his three campaigns for governor they could be depended upon to work with unceasing effort and enthusiasm for LaFollette, and many did without the hope or promise of political reward.

Like Jim Farley, Bob LaFollette had learned the knack of friendship. His personal magnetism and charm were potent forces, attracting men from all ranks of society to him and his cause. "There was about LaFollette a persuasive hypnotic power which it was difficult to resist. Mr. Lenroot said in later years: 'I did not want to be a candidate for governor in 1906, but when LaFollette asked me, how could I refuse?' ...Of LaFollette, more than of most public men, can it be said that he increased his social and political assets with each new meeting with a fellow man."¹⁹

19 Barton, op. cit., p. 54.

The relationship of LaFollette to his supporters was one of 'personal ascendancy.' 'Bob' was their trusted friend and leader; it was to him they looked for advice and leadership. Significantly, the men who worked ardently in his

behalf were primarily oriented to the man, rather than to his reforms.

In conclusion, we may say that the large numbers of men throughout the state who comprised the LaFollette clique were primarily motivated by affective irrationality.

Urban Democrats: LaFollette admittedly appealed to Democratic voters. He was interested in recruiting support from among all groups who believed in political reforms. His speeches were not colored by emphases on the virtues of party loyalty. Rather, they were noted for their lack of the usual type of political attacks on the other party. His appeal for support was on the basis that he was an 'independent' politician advocating reforms within the party structure which were necessary for the rejuvenation of representative government.

Considerable numbers of Democrats voted for him because they liked the man; he was sincere and fearless, as evidenced by his attacks on his own party; he championed reforms with which they were in basic agreement; he was independent and non-partisan. A vote for LaFollette did not signify for them a vote for the Republicans; it was a vote for good government. But it was more than that, for the Democratic party also stood for certain reforms, for democracy instead of plutocracy. Their vote for LaFollette was precisely that, a vote for the man in whom they had great confidence and

admiration. Such voting behavior can be termed affective irrationality.

Middle class: Although there is no statistical evidence available, we might assume that certain occupational groups of the middle-class, i.e., small shopkeepers, skilled artisans, and professionals, supported LaFollette for reasons similar to those given for the other groups. Those groups who felt the threat of organized wealth, or who resented the amorality of the corporation-politicians were likely to be susceptible to the leadership of LaFollette. LaFollette's attributes, such as his honesty, intelligence, charm, and command of public affairs would have significant appeal to the middle-class. The fact that he posed as a citizens' representative rather than as an advocate of special interest groups would be of importance for the small businessman.

Therefore, there is reason to believe, if the above analysis is correct, that LaFollette derived enthusiastic support from among certain urban middle-class groups. Again, we would characterize such action as predominantly affective irrationality.

Traditional Irrationality

There can be no doubt that many of the Republicans voting for LaFollette in 1900 were voting for the traditional party ticket rather than for a leader. The Republican party was strongly entrenched in the state and received unqualified support from certain men who identified it as the patriotic party, the party of their fathers. For such persons, voting a straight ticket was raised to the level of a ritual, so that questions of policy and platform were considered incidental. Such unquestioning support of the Republican party was not a general phenomenon, but it was a factor which must be considered in analyzing the LaFollette vote.

By maintaining his ties with the Republicans, LaFollette could capitalize on the traditional vote, obtaining votes from conservative groups who otherwise would not be favorable to his candidacy.

Summary of the Four Types of Rationality and Their Relevance to Voting Behavior

The analysis of the LaFollette vote, by the use of the four-fold classification of rationality, served to focus our attention on the importance of affective irrationality as a prime motivation for large numbers of voters. Affective irrationality consisted in this case of either, (a) recognition of LaFollette's exceptional qualities and therefore a faith in

the leader, (b) an emotional response and reaction to the appeals, or (c) a combination of both. The degree of enthusiasm, loyalty, trust and devotion in the leader, evidenced by many groups, was strong indication that their behavior was charged with more effectivity than rationality.

This leads us back to the original hypothesis: the voters' acceptance of LaFollette as their political reformist leader in 1900 was due to two factors, first, the recognition of his exceptional qualities, and secondly, his effective use and manipulation of appeals. These two factors were considered to constitute a strong affectively irrational force motivating behavior.

In the light of further evidence the hypothesis must be qualified. First, we know that the reaction to LaFollette was not uniform but varied according to different groups. Secondly, the large vote given to LaFollette cannot be explained only in terms of affective irrationality. Other factors must be accounted for, even though the behavior of a considerable group of voters could be characterized as affectively irrational. Any satisfactory theory which could have predictive validity must envisage the limitations contained in the data. In the case of LaFollette, the fact that many conservative Republicans voted for their party candidate in 1900 may have been crucial for his chances of success. The extent to which LaFollette would have been

successful in 1900 if he had run as an independent or third-party candidate can not be determined, but we may assume that his victory was assured once he received the nomination of the republican party, the traditional party of the state.

CONCLUSION

This paper has been devoted to a study of the factors explaining the voters' acceptance of LaFollette, a political reformist, insurgent republican, as their governor of Wisconsin in 1900. My hypothesis, based on evidence gleaned from newspaper files for the period 1897 to 1900, stated that this acceptance was due to the exceptional unique qualities of LaFollette and to his manipulation of appeals, both constituting a strong irrational motivation in voting behavior. It further elaborated that LaFollette, as a type of charismatic leader, was endowed with certain attributes held dear by the voters of Wisconsin, and as a master strategist and orator he was able to exploit the voters' resentment, patriotism and desire for reform.

Various factors were examined to validate this thesis: analysis of the economic conditions of the farmer, the political organization structure of the state, the history of reformist parties, the middle-class and ethnic composition of the state, and an analysis of the gubernatorial election of 1900 in terms of the vote of ethnic groups, urbanites and Democrats.

By the use of the four-fold classification of rationality certain groups of voters were classified. Affective

irrationality was the most significant type of rationality as a motivation for large groups of voters, e.g., dirt farmers, Norwegians, LaFollette clique, and urban democrats. This type of irrationality was significant primarily because it deviated from the accepted motivations for voting -- traditional irrationality or rational expediency. The relationship of large numbers of voters to LaFollette was characterized as intimate, emotional, and devoted. He was looked on as a leader of men, giving force and direction to their hopes, resentments, and values. LaFollette's personality and his appeals had affective meaning to these voters.

To summarize, the paper attempted to do two things: to examine the social structure for discovering the elements that made the voters restless and discontented; to analyze how it was possible for LaFollette to synthesize and manipulate the economic discontent, resentments, bourgeois and democratic values, for his ultimate success in 1900. The voters who were susceptible to LaFolletteism were characterized as affectively irrational. However, it is impossible to prove the numerical strength of such a group in determining the success of LaFollette at the ballot box. We can merely theorize that it is probable that many voters, and particular kinds of voters, were voting for the man and not the party. And we may further theorize that they voted as they did because of their faith, and devotion in LaFollette and in his

principles.

Of crucial importance is the fact that we were unable to adequately differentiate LaFollette's personal vote from a vote for the party. Thus we cannot prove that LaFollette's success in 1900 was due to his exceptional qualities and/or manipulation of appeals. Other factors, such as the vote of traditional conservative republicans, absence of effective opposition, weakening of 'machine', may have been more instrumental for his victory at the polls.

It is fair to state, however, that a sufficient number of followers of LaFollette were devoted, enthusiastic and loyal to justify distinguishing LaFollette's type of leadership from that of other politicians of his day. This factor-recognition of his leadership by many followers -- is deemed significant and necessary for LaFollette's election in 1900, but it was not necessarily the crucial factor nor sufficient to guarantee his election. Stated differently, La Follette might have won many adherents to his cause if he had operated independently of party ties. But it is highly possible that in such a case he might never have been elected governor because he would have lacked the necessary mass support, which a party with prestige and organization can give.

However, since LaFollette was operating as a republican insurgent, opposed to the interests of the dominant machine,

he needed exceptional qualifications to carry him into office. The nod of the machine, support of the press, and slush funds were unavailable to him. Thus he had to depend on other factors, namely charismatic qualities, to force the hand of the entrenched politicians in gaining recognition. In conclusion we may state, the voters' recognition of LaFollette's exceptional qualities and of his propaganda (appeals) was a necessary but not sufficient condition for his election as governor of Wisconsin in 1900.

Implicit in this paper is an assumption regarding the relationship of a deviant political leader to the social structure of a democracy. The success of a deviant political leader, reformist or revolutionary, in gaining political power by democratic procedures is contingent on two main factors: (a) the extent to which the values of large masses of the electorate fail to be incorporated into the existing social structure; (b) the extent to which the leader is able to symbolize the deviant and discordant values and attitudes of this group in society and to refocus and manipulate them for his purposes.

The conditions for such 'perfect discontent' are seldom, if at all, realized so that few leaders could rely solely on that factor for political success. For example, the election of LaFollette required, in addition to a prevailing discontent among certain groups in the state, a party affiliation which

could recruit voters to the republican banner who were not susceptible to the image or appeals of LaFollette.

The conditions for change must exist in the city before a leader advocating change can emerge with some measure of success. However, the conditions may exist without the necessary appearance of a leader. Thus, the cause and effect relationship is not obvious. Since the deviant leader's role is to articulate the discontent, to fuse the discordant elements of society and to give them direction and purpose, he makes society aware of the conditions for change. Would there have been Nazism without Hitler? Perhaps not. But could there have been a Hitler and National Socialism without the demoralized, broken Germany of 1932, with particular reference to the lower middle class? Most authorities would say no.

With reference to this paper, more research could have been profitably done regarding the failure of the traditional political machines for realizing the values of the electorate. Further research would clarify this problem and permit a more adequate comparison of LaFollette with other political leaders of his day, thus establishing his uniqueness.

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